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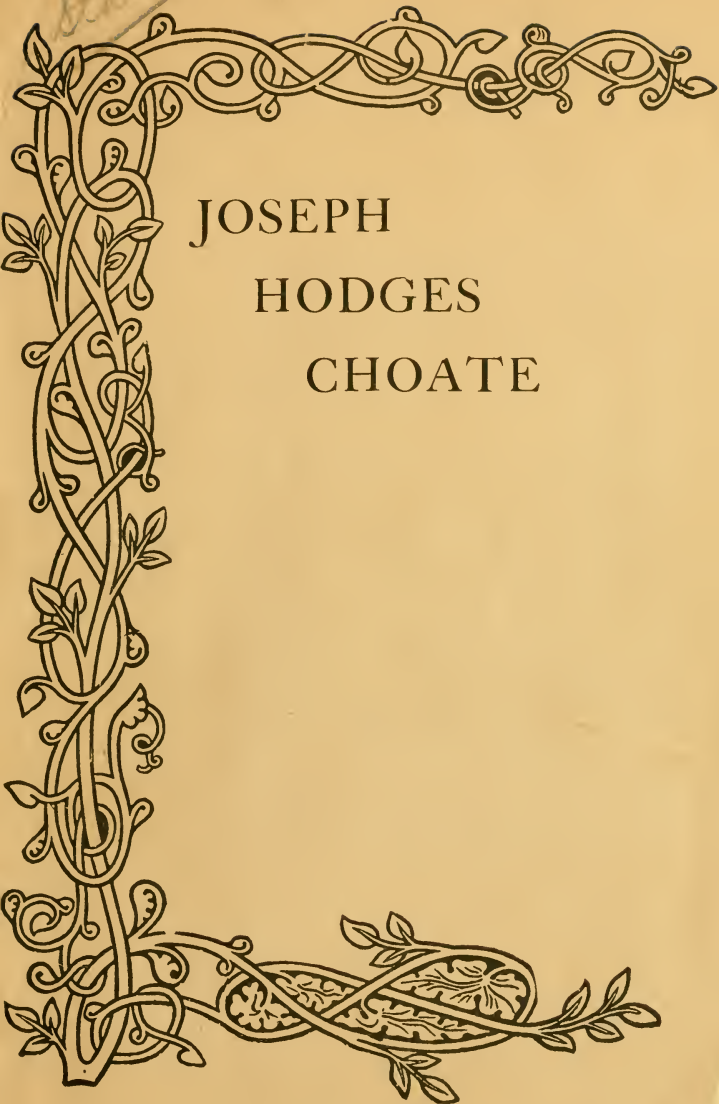
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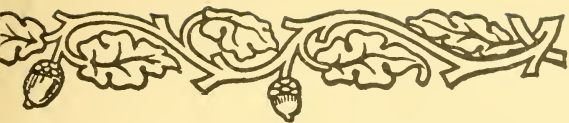


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JOSEPH
HODGES
CHOATE





JOSEPH HODGES CHOATE

LAWYER, STATESMAN,
HUMORIST, ORATOR



BY
JOHN E. MILHOLLAND

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Gansy King
Joseph W. Blythe

By translation



This little sketch of Mr. Choate is substantially a republication of an article that I wrote for "The New-York Tribune" about three years ago. At that time I did not even enjoy personal acquaintance with him. I mention the fact to absolve him from any responsibility for what I said or repeat.

It is, as I have stated, a sketch, not a study. I have merely drawn the outlines, enlivening the background with some characterizations, a few bits of biography and illustrative anecdotes. His political and professional speeches, his masterly work in the late Constitutional Convention, his memorable arguments before the courts and his various contributions to the thought of the day I have been compelled, owing to a lack of time at my disposal, for the present to leave to others. My aim has been to illustrate his character, courage and public spirit, that make him essentially the man of the hour, and one thoroughly qualified to meet the requirements

of the existing political situation in this imperial Commonwealth.

The inquiries that have come to me from various parts of the State and elsewhere for something more about his personality than appears in the encyclopedias has led to the publication of the article in this form.

J. E. M.



JOSEPH H. CHOATE



AD RUFUS CHOATE never lived, or had he been merely a reputable country lawyer, without wit, humor, eloquence, scholarly attainments, statesmanship qualities or a brilliant intellect, his kinsman, who delights New-York from time to time and whom New-York occasionally delights to honor, would be even more famous with the great mass of people than he is at present. In a sense, Mr. Choate is not a popular hero. To many outside the Eastern States he exists only as a name, and a name sometimes confused with that of his relative. Among the greatest advocates of the century, he stands at the head of the American Bar and in the foremost file of platform and post-prandial orators; the peer of any living man in mental ability, effectiveness of speech, graciousness

of manner, readiness of wit, spontaneity of humor, rapidity and range of ideas, lucidity of statement and mastery of human emotion, and yet he is really less known to the public than hundreds of men whom he easily ranks.

It would be unjust, however, to attribute the limitations of his fame to the traditional influence of his gifted cousin. There are other causes. One is his partnership with William M. Evarts and that venerable gentleman's political activity. People find it almost as difficult to believe that two such leaders of the Bar could be united in one firm as that father and son or uncle and nephew might be equally renowned. While Mr. Evarts's powerful personality remained in public view its shadow rested upon his younger associate, obscuring him, though unintentionally, of course, from the gaze of the multitude.

But more potent than anything else in preventing him from becoming a more conspicuous figure in the popular eye is Mr. Choate's own disposition. A genuine New-Englander, democratic in his faith and practice, liberal in his views, broad in his sympathies and full of common-sense, he is nevertheless as retiring, as conservative and, in the best sense, as aris-

toeratic as was Lowell himself, whom he resembles in many traits of character. Without a superior before a jury, able to arouse the enthusiasm of any assembly before which he appears, his utterances on all subjects commanding attention, respect and applause, he is not in the ordinary sense an idol of the people, like Blaine. To them he is the embodiment of dignity and reserve, relieved by a charming urbanity. They admire his brilliancy, his inimitable, unfailing humor, which, as Frederic R. Coudert observes, is absolutely unique, his marvellous persuasive powers, his courage and chivalrous bearing, but still they erroneously feel that he holds himself aloof from them, that he is removed from their domain of everyday life, and hence they have been content to see him as Pindar says he saw Archilochus—at a distance.

If further cause should be sought for this apparent lack of appreciation on the part of the masses it may be found in Mr. Choate's aversion to public life. Until nominated a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1894 he had never been a candidate for public office. Neither had he sought appointments at the hands of the Federal, State or city gov-

ernment. But while not an office-seeker he has never held public honors in contempt. As he quaintly says: "I have made it a rule never to seek office, nor never decline; but I suppose my friends knew I did not desire office, and that is why they never nominated me." He has been content with the honors that come to him from his remarkable professional success, his occasional appearance at important public dinners, in exciting campaigns, and at critical stages of our municipal affairs; in his interest in the Union League Club, of which he has been president, and his intimate connection with the New-England Society, to which he is most devoted.

This is the natural trend of his life, not because he is indifferent to the cause of good government or the needs of the people, but simply that, absorbed in his professional labors, he feels that his services are not required in party management or in the conduct of public affairs. But when the need of his aid is apparent, when a public task worthy of his powers demands attention, he is as quick to respond as any citizen in the metropolis. When there is a Street Cleaning Commissioner to be arraigned; a member of the Bar to be saved

from being sent to jail because of his reckless devotion to his client's interests; when an arrogant element of the population is to be good-naturedly reminded of its faults; a theft of the State Legislature to be exposed; a Tweed ring to be overthrown; a rotten Republican enrolment to be investigated; a Presidential trust to be fought in the interests of the people's candidate; or a dangerous State machine of his own party to be smashed, Joseph H. Choate is among the first to answer the clear call of duty.

It has become customary to say that Mr. Choate is a poor politician. As the term is ordinarily employed and understood he is, but it is precisely this quality in him, this readiness to say that which he really thinks, this freedom from cowardice, this detestation of truckling to ignorance and brutality in authority, this absolute independence that make sober-minded, patriotic citizens look up to him with so much respect and confidence. And this element of his character is no new development; it has always been one of his striking characteristics. In a speech before the New-England Society at Delmonico's in 1865, with

Recorder (afterward Governor) Hoffman, General Hancock, Admiral Farragut, Theodore Tilton, the Rev. Dr. Bellows and Senator Lane among the invited guests, he welcomed the representative of the St. Patrick's Society with some playful remarks that caused as much hubbub at the time, according to tradition, as his later address on St. Patrick's Day. But the criticism that followed had no effect in making him less outspoken. He is accustomed to such criticism. He understands it thoroughly. He knows that it is based upon ignorance, narrowness, prejudice. There is not a more zealous advocate of freedom for all nations, Cuba or Ireland, than Mr. Choate, but his belief in Home Rule does not blind him to the public sins of omission and commission by its advocates. He is not more ready to denounce Irish transgressors than he is those of any other nationality, as his memorable treatment of Benjamin F. Butler, while that politician was Governor of Massachusetts, demonstrated.

An official dinner was to be given at Cambridge by an association of which Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, was the president. Phillips Brooks and Mr. Choate were the vice-presidents. It has been etiquette for a

century for the Governor of the State to come to that dinner. The Governor had usually been a graduate of Harvard College, but there had been an upheaval. General Butler was Governor. Senator Hoar would not receive him. Phillips Brooks went to Europe. There was nobody in Massachusetts who could or would fill the difficult position. They had to send to New-York for Mr. Choate to preside. It is wonderful to note the tact with which he meted out to the Governor the respect due his position, and at the same time administered to Benjamin F. Butler a castigation such as suited the outraged feelings of the guests. The castigation was well fitted, because General Butler had formerly said many severe things about his entertainers and their college.

The next year a Harvard man was again Governor of the State, and Mr. Choate alluded in his annual address to the fact that "grim-visaged war"—General Butler—"had smoothed her wrinkled front."

These illustrations might be supplemented with an account of Mr. Choate's course in defending John W. Goff from the wrath and condemnation of Recorder Smyth and the Police Department; of his vigorous denunciation

before the Mayor of the incompetence of Tammany's Street Cleaning Commissioner; of his open defiance of Judge Truax when that genial dignitary of the bench attempted, as Mr. Choate thought, to deprive him of his rights; of his hearty espousal of the cause of Dorman B. Eaton, when he had been brutally assaulted and nearly killed for exposing the doings of Fisk, Tweed and their rascally tools on the bench, and of his relentless prosecution of Tweed and his associates.

Another display of this quality, so thoroughly ingrained in Mr. Choate's character, was before Justice Van Brunt. The Judge has a habit which often distresses members of the bar who appear before him, particularly young men, of talking to his associates on the bench while the lawyers are delivering their speeches. At times this becomes exasperating, but the lawyers have not, as a rule, the temerity to complain, for they recognize the power of the court, and Judge Van Brunt, with all his estimable qualities, has a manner that causes him to be held in dread by most practitioners, who naturally seek to maintain as pleasant relations as possible with the Court.

Mr. Choate was about to make the closing speech in a highly important case. Forty minutes had been allotted him for the purpose. He had scarcely uttered a dozen words when Judge Van Brunt wheeled around in his chair and began a discussion with Judge Andrews. Mr. Choate ceased speaking immediately, folded his arms and gazed steadily at the Judges, his handsome face a trifle paler than usual. A hush fell upon the courtroom. Judge Van Brunt, noticing the stillness, turned around and looked inquiringly at the silent advocate.

"Your Honor," said Mr. Choate, "I have just forty minutes in which to make my final argument. I shall not only need every second of that time to do it justice, but I shall also need your undivided attention."

"And you shall have it," promptly responded the Judge, at the same time acknowledging the justice of the rebuke by a faint flush on his cheeks. It was an exhibition of genuine courage, but one that was more fully appreciated by members of the profession than by the laymen who witnessed it.

This recalls in its boldness Rufus Choate's exception to a ruling of that exceedingly able but excessively homely jurist, Chief Justice

Shaw, of Massachusetts. He declared that he venerated the Court as the Indian does his curiously carved log—"I acknowledge he is ugly, but I feel that he is great." And Shaw never forgave the retort.

But sometimes even courage appears in an unfavorable light, as when, for instance, Mr. Choate in his professional capacity has been called upon to defend trusts and sorely pressed Tammany Mayors.

Mr. Choate's biography is not a hackneyed theme. His career has never yet been described save in the most condensed form; he has shunned notoriety as he would a plague. Born in the Salem of Hawthorne on January 24, 1832, his father was a cousin of Rufus Choate, who was then just entering his second term in Congress to distinguish himself by a great speech on the tariff. The family was one of the oldest in New-England. The earliest ancestor, John Choate, became a citizen of Massachusetts in 1667. The grandson of this first ancestor, also named John, was a member of the Massachusetts Legislature from 1741 till 1761, and for the five years following a member of the Governor's Council.

Strength of character and mental vigor were dominant characteristics of the race. David, a son of the Massachusetts legislator, and the father of Rufus, had not been trained in law, but on one occasion when he had a suit pending in court and his counsel happened to be absent he took up the case himself, examined his witnesses, tore to shreds the testimony of the other side, made a sound and eloquent argument and won the case.

No doubt some interesting stories might be told of Joseph's boyhood and school days, but the chroniclers are silent regarding that period. They say nothing as to whether he was precocious, like his famous relative Rufus, who, when a small boy, could repeat from memory page after page of the "Pilgrim's Progress," or whether his intellectual powers were of more gradual growth. Rufus Choate was a devoted alumnus of Dartmouth, but Joseph went to Harvard, and was graduated in the class of '52. Phillips Brooks was in college at the same time. Mr. Choate describes the great preacher as he saw him the first time, a tall, ungainly youth, but with a manner so irresistible that he captivated his classmates almost instantaneously. After graduation he spent two years

at the law school and received the sheep-skin at the end of the term. In 1855 he was admitted to the bar in Massachusetts, and in the following year came to New-York. He has practised here ever since. His brother, William Gardner Choate, who became United States Judge for the Southern District of this State, went through college and the law school with him.

The period in which Mr. Choate began his career here is commonly referred to as the golden age of the metropolitan bar. James T. Brady was a conspicuous figure in the popular eye. Charles O'Connor had already made a deep and lasting impression. Mr. Evarts was in the front rank of politics as well as of law. Mr. Hoffman was equally prominent on the Democratic side, and Mr. Stanford's brilliancy and marvellous powers in cross-examination had given him an enviable reputation. The legal heavens were studded with stars of such lustre that the modest young stranger from the Old Bay State might well have felt some concern about his own future. But from all accounts he displayed no anxiety. He hung out his shingle and began to look for clients. They

came. An opportunity was given him to display his qualities as an advocate. He was closely watched by the veterans who knew his kinsman. When he had finished his first important speech they agreed that he was worthy to bear the family name. Mr. Evarts was particularly attracted to him. A partnership was formed. It continues. It was more than a professional association; they were united by the bonds of friendship that have never been severed. Success and fame came quickly.

The firm is generally looked upon as the leading one in the country. Its business is enormous. Mr. Choate enjoys a lucrative practice, though his fees are looked upon as modest. The great lawyers who were his predecessors, such, for instance, as his relative, Rufus Choate, tried trifling country lawsuits all their days, with an occasional case of magnitude, but even this involved an amount which would be inconsiderable in his cousin's practice. So it was with Erskine and Nicholas Hill, and even Daniel Webster. It is remarked in court circles that Mr. Choate's contemporaries divide among them one-half of the business of the first magnitude, and Mr. Choate has the other half to himself. Why is it? His method goes

right home to the heart and head of judge and juryman. Where other lawyers are solemn and portentous, or wild or unpleasant, he is humorous and human. He assumes no superior air; often he speaks with his hands in his pockets. He strives to stir up no dark passions. While he is always a little keener, a little finer, and more witty than the man in the box or on the bench, yet he is always a brother man to him.

A history of Mr. Choate's professional career would require a sketch of a majority of the great cases that have been tried here and at Washington since the War. It would involve, among others, the story of the Tweed Ring prosecution, of the protracted investigation of the case of General Fitz-John Porter, whom he defended at West Point before the board of officers appointed by President Hayes, which resulted in the reversal of the judgment of the original court-martial; of the celebrated libel suit instituted by Gaston L. Feuardent against General Cesnola, whom Mr. Choate successfully defended; of the Tilden will case; the contest over Commodore Vanderbilt's millions; the Chinese exclusion case, in which he argued

against the validity of the act; his appeal to the Supreme Court in behalf of David Neagle, who shot Judge Terry in defence of Justice Field, and whose act was decreed to be no violation of the law; the Stokes will fight; the case of Manchester against the State of Massachusetts before the United States Supreme Court; the Behring Sea controversy; the great Income Tax suit before the Supreme Court, in which he was ably assisted by his talented young friend, William D. Guthrie; the theft of the State Senate by the Hill ring, and the memorable suit brought by David Stewart in 1881 against Collis P. Huntington for the payment of a large sum of money, which the plaintiff declared was due him under the terms of agreement that he made with Huntington at the time when he purchased a block of Central Pacific stock from the defendant.

This was one of unusual interest. All those involved were well known, and the recital of the doings of the "Big Four" of the Pacific Coast, Huntington, Hopkins, Crocker and Stanford, in connection with the Central Pacific's construction, which was brought out by the trial, made an entertaining chapter at the hands of Mr. Choate, who appeared alone for

Mr. Stewart. His rival in a dozen contests, Francis N. Bangs, whose passages at arms with him in the Cesnola case will long be remembered, and Roscoe Conkling, then in the prime of his intellectual life and entirely devoted to his law practice, had been retained by Mr. Huntington. They made a formidable pair of defenders. Mr. Choate made the most of this fact with the jury. "I doubt, gentlemen," he said, "whether any man ever had to contend alone against so powerful a combination. In the first place, there is the defendant himself, one of the three great railway monarchs of the world, all powerful throughout the length and breadth of the land, and he has called here to aid him, as was his right, the greatest powers of the bar, the most astute, the most crafty—in the best sense of the word—the most skilful of our profession, and," with a graceful wave of the hand toward Mr. Conkling, "the very Demosthenes of our time. And yet I do not feel entirely alone or entirely unarmed. I have the evidence in this case with me, and if I can put that little weapon in my sling and aim straight at his forehead, the recent Goliath of the continent is bound to bite the dust."

The marvellous rapidity with which he takes advantage of every point and sees the elements in every situation that are favorable to him was exhibited to advantage on this trial again and again. Mr. Huntington while on the stand proved, from the layman point of view, a poor witness for Mr. Choate. His memory was sadly defective. Mr. Choate's most skillful cross-questioning could elicit from him little if any specific information as to the operations of the famous Contract and Finance Company. His counsel smiled blandly and the plaintiff himself looked gloomy. But observe with what telling effect Mr. Choate used this temporary triumph of his opponent.

"My learned friends upon the other side," said he in closing, "have expressed a little regret and a kind of rebuke for me because I described their client as the Jay Gould of the Pacific Coast. Now, gentlemen, a great historical person like Mr. Gould we speak of without personality, and I challenge your attention to the appearance of this defendant on the stand to say whether he has not filled the bill. Remember that dreadful Black Friday, when the wizard of the New-York Stock Market pulled the wires behind the scenes that

brought destruction upon so many honest men, and afterward, when called in a court of justice to describe the proceedings of that day, he knew absolutely nothing about it, although it was all his own work. And positively as to a certain check he had drawn, he could not say whether it was for five million or ten million dollars. When Mr. Huntington took this stand and swore that as to the dividends he had received from the Contract and Finance Company between October, 1867, and May, 1870, he would not tell whether they were one million or two millions, three millions, four millions or five millions—did he not fill the bill?"

Mr. Conkling had insisted that his client was not responsible for what his associates had done on the Pacific Coast. To this Mr. Choate responded: "Well, gentlemen, it reminds me of an alibi that was introduced in another famous case. You remember when Mr. Tony Weller was called in consultation about the defence of Mr. Pickwick, in whose arms the fair widow who sued him had been found dissolving in tears, and he said: 'Sammy, my advice to you is to prove an alibi.' Some defendants, when brought to trial, believe in character, and some in an alibi; but I advise you to

stick to an alibi and let the character go. This double of Mr. Huntington, under whose cover he exists, and is in two places at the same time—on the Atlantic and the Pacific—my distinguished friend said it was a romance, the connection between him and Mark Hopkins. I thought, gentlemen, of that other romance, the story of 'My Double and How He Undid Me,' and it seems that the defendant was then to undo him in this case—this Mark Hopkins, by whom he was represented absolutely, completely, and without any limitation whatever, so that you might say that when Mr. Huntington took snuff on the Atlantic Coast, Mr. Hopkins sneezed on the Pacific."

A little further on he paid a glowing tribute to Mr. Conkling—one, it is said, that the ex-Senator held in grateful remembrance. "However we may differ," said Mr. Choate, "one from another, or all of us from him, we owe the Senator one debt of gratitude for standing steadfast and incorruptible in the halls of corruption. Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego won immortal glory for passing one day in the fiery furnace, but he has been twenty years there and has come out without even the smell of smoke upon his garments."

There were sharp encounters every day between these powerful adversaries, but Mr. Choate never failed to hold his own, and usually came off victorious. In the course of one of his speeches Mr. Conkling quoted a published description of Mr. Choate's appearance. It provoked a laugh, in which the victim joined good-naturedly. But when he came to reply he turned the laugh on his opponent. "My learned friend," he blandly remarked, "has been a little personal. He has seen fit to quote for your entertainment and that of the learned Court and this audience a description of my face and features that he gathered from a newspaper. I do not like to lie under this imputation and I will return it. But, gentlemen, not from any newspaper—oh, no! I will paint his picture as it has been painted by an immortal pen. I will give you a description of him as the divine Shakespeare painted it, for he must have had my learned friend in his eye when he said:

"See what a grace is seated on his brow;
Hyperion's curl, the front of Jove himself;
An eye, like Mars, to threaten and command—
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man."

In the general laugh that greeted this quotation Mr. Conkling joined heartily.

Shakespearian quotations are in great favor with Mr. Choate, but he uses them only when they are apposite. A hit which he scored in the Cesnola trial is illustrative of this. Clarence Cook, the art critic, had given testimony unfavorable to General Cesnola, whom Mr. Choate was defending. Something was developed on the cross-examination that materially weakened the statements made by the witness, whereupon Mr. Choate turned, his countenance expressive of well-assumed indignation, and, pointing his finger at Mr. Cook, said, dramatically:

“False, fleeting, perjured Clarence!”

His tilts with Mr. Bangs, however, were most frequent and most severe. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast in the manner of the two contestants. Mr. Bangs was impulsive, excitable; Mr. Choate has never yet, it is said, been known to lose control of himself in court. No matter what happens, no matter what is said, he invariably remains cool and complacent. This gave him an important advantage over Mr. Bangs, who remarked more than once that his “life would be shortened by that fellow Choate.”

Mrs. Paran Stevens was sued by Richard M. Hunt, the architect, for services in building the Victoria Hotel. In summing up Mr. Choate said: "For the last week, gentlemen of the jury, we have been engaged here in bitter contest. It has tired us all. Coming by my children's nursery door this morning it was soothing to the ear to hear the children recite the nursery ballad of 'The House that Jack Built,' for this, gentlemen, is the house that Jack built. My client is the unfortunate Jack, and," with deference, "you, madam," bowing gracefully to Mrs. Stevens, "may be called the maiden that milked the cow with the crumpled horn, which might stand for the somewhat crumpled Stevens estate." The Stevens estate was in continual litigation for many years.

One of Mr. Choate's friends describes a scene before Judge Freedman some years ago. The counsel for the plaintiff, John E. Parsons, denounced the defendant insurance company as "vampires, bloodless monsters, that feed on the blood of the people," etc. It was a savage address of the old-fashioned style. When Mr. Parsons sat down the courtroom seemed to buzz. Mr. Choate was lying back in his chair, with his

eyes to the ceiling and his hands in his pockets. "Mr. Choate, it is your turn," said the Judge, and Mr. Choate arose, still with his hands in his pockets. "If Your Honor please, and gentlemen of the jury," said he, "do you know what a vampire really is? Look at the Quaker gentleman who is the president of this company. He sits there in his Quaker clothes and white neck-cloth. Look at that innocent young man, his attorney, who sits next him and has a smile on his face. You thought vampires were something out of the way when Brother Parsons described them, but these are regular, genuine vampires."

The excitement of the spectators merged into a laugh and then into a feeling friendly to the speaker.

In a Cooper Institute meeting the discussion was about Tammany's judicial nomination of a wealthy young man. Mr. Choate spoke of the nominee in the most friendly terms, but added: "Yes; he is a capable young man. In his term of fourteen years he will learn enough to be a judge."

A pompous young man called on Mr. Choate at his office. He was asked to take a chair. The

lawyer was busy, but the youth was impatient, and in a moment interrupted the lawyer again with the remark, "I am Bishop Blank's son." "Please take two chairs," said Mr. Choate.

But to hear him at his best one must go to the New-England Society's dinners—those gatherings, as he calls them, of an "unhappy company of Pilgrims who meet annually at Delmonico's to drown the sorrows and sufferings of their ancestors in the flowing bowl, and to contemplate their own virtues in the mirror of history"—particularly if Mr. Depew is there, too. In the words of Secretary Hubbard, who Mr. Choate insists came over in the Mayflower, "it is a rare treat." Everybody knows that Mr. Choate will have some fun at the expense of his famous rival, and everybody knows that Mr. Depew will not spare him in return.

He was once delivering the opening address on his pet theme, "Forefathers' Day." Mr. Depew was to follow with a toast to "The State of New-York." "One day last week," said Mr. Choate, "I was waited upon by a representative of one of our great metropolitan dailies with a polite

request that I should furnish him with a copy of the speech I was to deliver this evening, in order that it might be 'set up' at the latest on Monday morning for publication to-morrow. 'God bless you,' said I, 'I have no copy to give you. How can I make an after-dinner speech until I have made sure of my dinner?' Well, he seemed a little chopfallen, but proceeded to argue the matter. 'Why,' said he, 'we have got all the rest.' 'Surely,' said I, 'you have not got Depew's.' 'Oh, yes,' said he, 'we have got him cold in cold type.' "

A roar of laughter followed at the expense of the Central's president. After a while it was his turn. "The reporter who called on me for my speech," he remarked, "said to me, as he said to Choate: 'I have them all,' but also added: 'Have you any poetry in yours?' Said I: 'No.' 'Well,' said he, 'Choate has, and after reading it I came to the conclusion that he must have written it himself.'

At one dinner General Porter and Mr. Depew were both present. Mr. Choate's face fairly beamed with delight as he extended to them a greeting that brought down the house. "I am sure," he said, "you would not allow me to quit

this pleasing programme if I did not felicitate you upon the presence of two other gentlemen without whom no banquet is ever complete. I mean, of course, Mr. Depew and General Porter. Their splendid efforts on a thousand fields like this have fairly won their golden spurs. I forget whether it was Pythagoras or Emerson who finally decided that the soul of mankind is located in the stomach, but these two gentlemen, certainly, by their achievements on such arenas as this, have demonstrated at least this rule of anatomy, that the pyloric orifice is the shortest cut to the human brain. Their well-won title of first of dinner orators is the true survival of the fittest, for I assure you that their triumphant struggles in all these many years at scenes like this would long ago have laid all the rest of us under the table, if not under the sod. And so I think in your names I may bid them welcome, thrice welcome—*duo fulmina belli.*”

His speeches on these occasions sparkle with wit and glow with humor. “Now,” said he once, glancing up admiringly at the gallery in Delmonico’s dining-room, which had just been filled with ladies, “now I understand what the Script-

ural phrase means, 'Thou madest man a little lower than the angels.' "

His response to a toast to the fair sex is well known, but it will bear repetition: "And then women, the better-half of the Yankee world, at whose tender summons even the stern Pilgrims were ever ready to spring to arms, and without whose aid they never could have achieved their historic title of the Pilgrim Fathers. The Pilgrim Mothers were more devoted martyrs than were the Pilgrim Fathers, because they had not only to bear the same hardships that the Pilgrim Fathers suffered, but they had to bear with the Pilgrim Fathers besides."

His gallantry is proverbial, like the spotlessness of the Bayards. It has had some charming exhibitions. He and Mrs. Choate were recently dining with New-York friends. Some one asked him who he would prefer to be if he could not be himself. He hesitated for a moment, apparently running over in his mind the great ones on earth, when his eyes fell upon Mrs. Choate. "If I could not be myself," he suddenly replied, "I should like to be Mrs. Choate's second husband!"

He is not, however, all mirth. It is, at most, only a happy incident in his life. With all his pleasantries he is still the New-Englander of conscience, culture and fervent patriotism, and the manner in which he blends these qualities with his humorous utterances is sometimes most delightful. Take, for example, his introduction of General Sherman. "I do not know," said he, "that the great General of our armies drew his first breath upon New-England soil, but this I know, that he has eaten so good a share of so many New-England dinners that a full current of New-England blood must now flow in his veins. He was a leader of New-England 'hosts' long before he ate his first dish of pork and beans at your table. When, following the glorious soul of John Brown, that always marched on before, he led his battalions of Yankees through Georgia, from Atlanta to the sea, he was writing a genuine chapter of the Pilgrim's progress."

When serious, few rise higher in flights of eloquence. "How," he asked in introducing General Grant, "could the United States of America be so fitly represented and responded to as by that great soldier, who long ago spoke for her

at the cannon's mouth in thunder tones that still echo around the globe?"

Nothing seems to stir his spirit like the Pilgrims. Here is one of his glowing periods, the peroration of a New-England dinner speech: "When that little company of Nonconformists at Scrooby, with Elder William Brewster at their head, having lost all but conscience and honor, took their lives in their hands and fled to Protestant Holland, seeking nothing but freedom to worship God in their own way, and to earn their scanty bread by the sweat of their brows; when they toiled and worshipped there at Leyden for twelve long suffering years; when at last, longing for a larger liberty, they crossed the raging Atlantic in that crazy little bark that bore at the peak the cross of St. George, the sole emblem of their country and their hopes; when they landed in the dead of winter on a stern and rock-bound coast; when they saw, before the spring came around, half of the number of their dear comrades perish of cold and want; when they knew not where to lay their heads—

"They little thought how clear a light
With years should gather round this day,
How love should keep their memories bright,
How wide a realm their sons should sway.

How the day and the place should be honored as the source from which true liberty derived its birth, and how at last a Nation of fifty millions of freemen should bend in homage over their shrine. We honor them for their dauntless courage, for their sublime virtue, for their self-denial, for their hard work, for their common-sense, for their ever-living sense of duty, for their fear of God, that cast out all other fears, and for their raging thirst for liberty. In common with all those generations through which we trace our proud lineage to their hardy stock, we owe a great share of all that we have achieved, and all that we enjoy of strength, of freedom, of prosperity, to their matchless virtue and their grand example. So long as America continues to love truth and duty, so long as she cherishes liberty and justice, she will never tire of hearing the praises of the Pilgrims or of heaping fresh incense upon their altar."



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